

Parenting Partnership

Brief Program Description

Parenting Partnership is a collaborative initiative between corporate worksites and human service providers that is focused on enhancing parenting skills, knowledge, and attitudes while at the same time facilitating the creation of support networks within a natural setting, the worksite. The project provides for a delivery model that enables high levels of intensity and fidelity, that is, creates a high dosage program that is sustainable in a host site where attendance is facilitated. The Partnership is based in the understandings that: 1) parents will provide their children with developmentally enhancing family environments to the extent that they possess the skills, support, and information they need to function and handle stress in healthy ways; and 2) are able to use those skills and draw on critical support resources (i.e., other parents in the workplace) to avoid their own involvement in substance abuse and other adaptive difficulties. Thus, the Parenting Project strives to prevent substance abuse and related socio-emotional, behavioral and academic difficulties by reducing the exposure of children and youth to developmental risk conditions and by enhancing protective factors in the family.

Program Strategies

Parenting Partnership seeks to overcome the multiple barriers that may limit the impact of, and participation in, parent training and support programs including a lack awareness of programs, high dropout and sporadic attendance rates that characterize most parent training programs because of time and access issues, low levels of father involvement, and time-limited programming with little followup or integration of the lessons into the daily discourse of parent's lives—a critical element for internalization and generalization. The Partnerships sought to attend to the needs and demands of the life contexts of parents, which may often be in conflict with their ability to attend programs as offered, in this case, the barriers to program participation confronted by working parents.

To address systemic barriers to program participation by working parents, the Parenting Partnership delivered training sessions in partnership with corporations at the worksite. Specifically, parent training courses were led by a trained facilitator and held in the worksite during the employee's lunch/meal time. Training materials and coursework focused on the issues cited above as well as intentionally on the development and strengthening of the levels of a "parenting network" of support within the worksite. Each complete Parenting Partnership course provides 24 one-hour sessions, twice a week, for 12 weeks. Separate content materials were designed for parents of children aged 0-6, 7-12, and 13-18 years old, containing curricular elements that matched the developmental

issues of each age group. There are "course two" and "course three" materials for those who elect to continue.

Parenting Partnership provides three key program elements: 1) corporate-agency-community resource exchange systems; 2) parent training sessions; and 3) continued opportunities for organizational development and consultation.

Population Focus

The target population for the Parenting Partnership is parents who are employed. Recruitment efforts focus on broad participation from mothers and fathers, and employees of varied occupations and rank.

Suitable Settings

Parenting Partnership can be delivered in almost any workplace in which staff can gather during their mealtimes. It can be done not only in partnership with management but as part of benefits and wellness programming provided through union and other labor agreements and groups.

Required Resources

The National Center on Public Education and Social Policy (NCPE) provides consultation and develops and publishes the training and curriculum materials, developmental parent training manuals and materials, and the assessment/evaluation measures required for working effectively with corporations and other workplaces and labor organizations in the development and implementation of the Parenting Partnership or similar efforts. NCPE also provides program evaluation, data handling, and statistical support to many entities including those conducting parent training programs based in the Parent Partnership and related models.

Implementation Timeline

Negotiations with corporations and "upfront" development time can typically take 1 to 2 months. The program runs for a minimum of 3 months but settings may elect to continue the program far longer, and materials are available for more advanced programming and training. The greater the dosage and intensity, the greater the impact.

Outcomes

- Parental retention and participation levels were maintained at high levels (average of 80%+ retention and 75%+ session attendance) for the full length of the program.

- The program was able to overcome, what are often found to be, lower levels of participation by some demographic subgroups (e.g., fathers, families in poverty).
- Program dosage was significantly related to impact: parents in the program who received high dosage levels (i.e., more than 80% of sessions) showed, both, better short-term and longer-term impacts (i.e., across 18-month followups) on child behavior problems and strengths, substance abuse resistance related knowledge and attitudes, reduced parental stress, depression and irritability, and increased utilization of social support.
- By contrast, parents who received a low program dosage exhibited a more restricted set of short-term gains.
- Several sites investigated and provided initial evidence of gains in worker satisfaction/productivity.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

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